

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 SAA-01 SSM-03 SES-02 CIAE-00  
DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 EUR-12 TRSE-00 /095 W  
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R 211302Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9323  
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 4841

E.O. 11652: NA  
TAGS: PINT LE SY US PEPR PINS  
SUBJ: MONDAY MORNING INTERVIEW OF PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS

1. SUMMARY: THE AUGUST 21 ISSUE OF THE BEIRUT WEEKLY MONDAY MORNING CARRIED AN INTERVIEW WITH LEBANESE PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS, IN WHICH HOSS COMMENTS ON LEBANON'S CURRENT PROBLEMS. HOSS STATED THAT LEBANON FELT "LET DOWN" BY THE UNITED STATES OVER THE DEPLOYMENT OF LEBANESE ARMY TROOPS TO SOUTH LEBANON, THAT LEBANON HAD NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER OR NOT TO CALL FOR A SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING OVER SOUTH LEBANON, THAT HIS RECENT TALKS WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFIZ AL-ASSAD WERE "VERY CORDIAL AND VERY POSITIVE," AND THAT HE WAS SURE THE MANDATE OF THE ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF) WOULD BE RENEWED. THE FOLLOWING ARE EXERPTS FROM THE INTERVIEW. END SUMMARY.

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2. ACCORDING TO THE MONDAY MORNING INTERVIEW, HOSS STATED THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT FELT "LET DOWN" BY THE UNITED STATES BECAUSE "THE UNITED STATES WAS ONE OF THE COUNTRIES WHICH ENCOURAGED US TO DISPATCH AN ARMY UNIT TO THE SOUTH." HOSS SAID THAT AMBASSADOR LEONARD AND MR. HOWELL, DURING THEIR VISIT TO LEBANON, HAD "STRESSED THE URGENCY OF DISPATCHING AN ARMY UNIT

TO THE SOUTH, AND HAD SAID THAT THIS WAS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT "BECAUSE THE SECURITY COUNCIL WILL SOON BE CONSIDERING THE EXTENSION OF UNIFIL'S MANDATE." HOSS SAID THAT HE DISCUSSED WITH THE AMERICANS "THE MANNER IN WHICH THE USA COULD HELP VIS-A-VIS ISRAEL, SHOULD ISRAEL TAKE A HOSTILE STAND TOWARD THE ARMY DEPLOYMENT. I WAS ASSURED OF U.S. INTERVENTION WHENEVER NECESSARY IN ORDER TO OVERCOME ANY HINDRANCES THAT MIGHT ARISE FROM THE SIDE OF ISRAEL."

3. HOSS TOLD MONDAY MORNING THAT THE LEBANESE GOVERNMENT WAS CONSIDERING CALLING FOR A MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL TO DISCUSS THE LEBANESE ARMY UNIT STALLED KAWKABA. HOSS NOTED THAT THE SECURITY COUNCIL WAS ALREADY SCHEDULED TO MEET IN MID-SEPTEMBER TO DISCUSS THE RENEWAL OF THE MANDATE FOR UNIFIL, AND HE SAID THAT THE FINAL DECISION ON WHETHER OR NOT TO CALL FOR AN EARLIER MEETING WOULD "DEPEND ON THE RESULTS OF THE DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS THAT WE ARE NOW CONDUCTING." HOSS ALSO STATED THAT THE CONVERSION OF UNIFIL FROM A PEACEKEEPING FORCE TO A FORCE THAT WOULD "TAKE ACTION" IS "SOMETHING THAT WE WILL HAVE TO DISCUSS WITH THE UNITED NATIONS."

4. HOSS DESCRIBED HIS AUGUST 14 AND 15 TALKS WITH SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFIZ AL-ASSAD IN LATAKIA AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BEING "VERY CORDIAL AND VERY POSITIVE." HOSS SAID THAT HE AND ASSAD HAD DISCUSSED "A NUMBER OF ISSUES PERTAINING TO THE SITUATION IN LEBANON." HOSS SAID THAT THE EMPHASIS OF THE TALKS HAD BEEN ON POLITICAL ISSUES AND THAT "ANY SOLUTION WILL REQUIRE A LOT OF EFFORT BEFORE IT BEARS FRUIT." HOSS STATED THAT THERE WERE NO DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HIMSELF AND ASSAD.

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5. WHEN ASKED ABOUT THE RENEWAL OF THE MANDATE FOR THE SYRIAN DOMINATED ARAB DETERRENT FORCE (ADF), HOSS SAID THAT:

--THE ADF CAME TO LEBANON TO PERFORM A "SPECIFIC ROLE" AND THAT IT WAS "SUPPOSED TO STAY UNTIL (THE LEBANESE) ARMY IS REBUILT PROPERLY AND ON SOLID FOUNDATIONS." HOSS ADDED THAT "WE WILL HAVE NO PROBLEMS IN SECURING THE EXTENSION OF THE ADF'S MANDATE."

--"IT IS VERY UNLIKELY" THAT THERE WOULD BE ANY REDUCTION IN THE SIZE OF THE ADF FORCES.

--THE POSSIBILITY OF WITHDRAWING ADF UNITS FROM BEIRUT AND REDEPLOYING THEM IN BACK-UP POSITIONS AROUND BEIRUT IS "LINKED TO . . . THE REBUILDING OF THE LEBANESE ARMED FORCES."

6. HOSS SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THE SECURITY SITUATION IN LEBANON "CANNOT BE STABILIZED FIRMLY AND PERMANENTLY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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UNLESS AND UNTIL IT IS REINFORCED BY POLITICAL STABILITY IN THE COUNTRY." HOSS THOUGHT IT WAS "FUTILE TO CONTINUE TO DEAL WITH SECURITY ABERRATIONS AND UPHEAVALS WITH PURELY MILITARY MEANS . . . THE PROPER APPROACH IS TO TACKLE THE ROOTS OF THE CRISIS," AND THAT THESE ARE "LARGELY POLITICAL AND TO SOME EXTENT SOCIAL."

7. COMMENTING FURTHER ON THIS THIS, HOSS SAID THAT:

--THE FORMATION OF A NEW GOVERNMENT SHOULD BE "THE OUTCOME OF NATIONAL CONSENSUS AND NOT A PRELUDE FOR IT." HOSS NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO IMPROVEMENT IN THE POLITICAL SITUATION SINCE HIS GOVERNMENT RESIGNED IN APRIL 1978, AND THAT, ON THE

CONTRARY, "IT LOOKS AS THOUGH DISCORD HAS ASSUMED  
NEW DIMENSIONS SINCE THEN."

--THE 1975-76 CIVIL WAR HAD ENDED "WITH NONE OF  
ITS CAUSES ELIMINATED."

--"A LOT OF WHAT HAS BEEN HAPPENING IN THE COUNTRY IS OUR  
OWN RESPONSIBILITY AS LEBANESE. IF WE WANT TO FREE  
OURSELVES FROM THIS PLIGHT, IT IS LARGELY WITHIN OUR CONTROL  
TO DO SO... WE SHOULD NOT ALWAYS LOOK TO THE OUTSIDE  
TO EXPLAIN OR TO JUSTIFY WHAT IS TAKING PLACE IN THE  
COUNTRY. WE CAN SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS BY AGREEING AMONG  
OURSELVES, AS LEBANESE."

8. COMMENT: THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE HAS ANNOUNCED SOME-  
WHAT VAGUELY THAT AL-HOSS WAS MISQUOTED IN THE INTERVIEW. WE  
SUSPECT, HOWEVER, THAT HOSS MADE THE REMARKS ABOUT THE U.S.  
THEY ARE SIMILAR IN TONE AND SUBSTANCE TO ONES REPORTEDLY MADE  
BY FOREIGN MINISTER BOUTROS ON AUGUST 11 (SEE BEIRUT 4677).  
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END COMMENT.

DECONTROL OCTOBER 21, 1978.  
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## Message Attributes

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